



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

NEW BOOKS REVIEWED

ORIGINS AND DESTINY OF IMPERIAL BRITAIN. By the late J. A. CRAMB, M.A. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1915.

When we permit ourselves really to think about the world-tragedy now being enacted upon the European stage, when we attempt in all earnestness of spirit to realize its full awfulness and to catch a glimpse of its true significance, the effort probably reduces us, in most cases, to a state of intellectual humility. What we crave, then, is the steadying effect of elemental truth, of eternal verity, if any there be. We are no longer in a mood, therefore, to be enraptured by grandiose generalizations, however inspiring and inwardly logical. Such, perhaps, is the reaction upon thoughtful people, not only in England but throughout the world, of what L. P. Jacks in a recent article in the *Yale Review* appropriately calls "the real thing." Hence it may be doubted that Professor Cramb's *Origins and Destiny of Imperial Britain* any longer expresses, as a whole, a generally acceptable point of view. The work is a reprint of a course of lectures delivered in May, June, and July, 1900—lectures immediately inspired, we are told, by the war in South Africa. With regard to that unpleasant struggle England may have felt the need of stimulation, of philosophic assurances, of the sense of profound and ultimate justifications. Emphatically she feels no such need now.

To the scientific historians and to the critics of events who are moved by the impartial scientific spirit, we may turn nowadays with intellectual sympathy, if with no exalted hope. Professor Cramb's book, however, belongs not to the scientific, but to the prophetic order of literature: it is either inspiring or else wholly unconvincing. If the author's point of view be found congenial, if it be accepted as in the last analysis the only completely satisfying point of view, then plenty of historic confirmation for it will be found, impressively massed, in the book which it informs. But if the fundamental assumption be questioned, then the book will be found rather empty of proof; to read it will be like reading the Old Testament with a want of faith in the Hebrew conception of the Lord God of Battles. The style of the treatise reflects its spirit; it is dithyrambic. Indeed, in its emotional use of thick-swarmling historic allusions, and in its luxuriance of metaphor, it sometimes comes perilously near to "hifalutin,"—a fault

from which it is saved, however, by genuine learning, real intellectual vigor, and evident sincerity. It may be said, perhaps, that if John Richard Green had been an extreme philosophical imperialist, he might have written like this.

From a work couched in a style that is at once highly poetic and a trifle pedantic, it is a little difficult to deduce definite general principles. Professor Cramb's view of history appears to be in a high degree romantic; it is one more exaltation of "the flux." Empires, it would seem, are forces of nature, and as such are very great and worshipful things. Tracing the characteristics of ancient and medieval empires, the author finds the British Empire greater and more ideal than any one of the past: "In Britain a mode of imperialism which may be described as democratic displays itself—a mode which in human history is rarely encountered, and never save at crises and fraught with consequences memorable to all time." The mission of imperial Britain is "to bring to the peoples of the earth beneath her sway the larger freedom and the higher justice; the world has known none fairer, none more exalted, since that for which Godfrey and Richard fought, for which Barbarossa and St. Louis died."

Empires and nations being such as they are, the laws of their being are somewhat, though perhaps not wholly, different from those governing individual conduct. "The orbit described by the life of the State is of a wider and mightier sweep than the orbit of the separate life." The author suggests that "the laws which regulate the actions or the sufferings of States, as such, have too peremptorily been assumed to be by nature, and the ground plan of the universe identical with the laws of individual life, its actions, or its sufferings, and that it is something of a *petitio principii*, in the present state of our knowledge, to judge the one by standards applicable only to the other." In the sentences just quoted the word *sufferings*, be it observed, is used with intention. It is thus used by the author in preparation for the enunciation of his "Law of Tragedy as Applied to History." And it is in the upholding of this law that Professor Cramb really takes his definite plunge into romanticism. The laws governing the morality of empires, he tells us in effect, are to be looked for not within the realm of our ordinary ethical instincts, but rather in the domain of art; in art, and in history read with artistic insight, we may find adumbrations, faint but sufficient, of the guiding principles that we are seeking. In the lives of nations, as in the lives of men, there is occasionally revealed an influence analogous to that ascribed to tragedy—a purification of the soul through compassion and terror. In its hour of agony, a nation, like a man, may achieve a more intense self-consciousness, a deeper spiritual insight. This newer consciousness, this deeper insight, become henceforth its law. The more exalted ideal which the nation has conceived in the depths of suffering, it now pursues "unalterably, unswervingly, as if swept on by a law of Nature." The destiny of the nation thus acquires a sort of spiritual warrant, in view

of which it were pusillanimous to complain of the noble sufferings—petty to cavil at the apparent infractions of a minor moral code—which the fulfilment of this destiny may entail. In the last resort it is the element of tragedy, with its spiritually purifying effect and its heart-shaking grandeur, which supplies the meaning and justification of the whole human struggle. The view of things roughly sketched above, the author presses home with real eloquence and with something of the strange gift which romantic thinkers often possess of rousing in us emotions that seem deeper and broader than the ordinary, of appealing to the instinct in human nature for the morally grandiose.

After this it is not surprising to find in subsequent chapters an eloquent glorification of war and a fervent defense of militarism, including compulsory service, as not out of harmony with the ideals or the essential qualities of the English people. That there are trenchant half-truths and real insights in Professor Cramb's work no one who has honestly admitted to himself the profound appeal of the kind of thinking in which the author indulges will be inclined to deny. But somehow the hour seems peculiarly inauspicious for such impassioned system-building as is represented by *Origins and Destiny of Imperial Britain*. The world is now face to face with "the real thing," and will draw such conclusions as it must; it is waiting, in a spirit not exactly equivalent to joy, to see what those conclusions will be. To the critical reader who is sobered rather than impassioned by the tragic terror of the time it may seem, perhaps, that Professor Cramb is as idealistically ferocious as Nietzsche, rather less reasonable, on the whole, than Treitschke. Such a reader will be inclined to feel a trifle chilled by a treatise that seems to hold up as the highest ideal the extension of—may one say English *Kultur*?—to the ends of the earth.

THE LIFE OF NIETZSCHE. By FRAU FOERSTER-NIETZSCHE, translated by PAUL V. COHN. Volume II. New York: Sturgis and Walton Company, 1915.

Whatever may be the ultimate verdict upon Nietzsche's philosophy as a whole, few who are capable of forming an opinion upon the subject would nowadays deny him the distinction that is due to an acute and tremendously earnest thinker. Through an almost uncanny psychological insight and through a ruthless sincerity—a sincerity sometimes as trying to the soul as is martyrdom to the body—he gained the power to make the world stop and think, to make it consider, at least, a revision of its most cherished values. His influence, like that of Tolstoi, with whom in most respects he stands in so sharp a contrast, is due in no small part to his whole-souled devotion to what he conceived as the cause of truth—a devotion that gives to his character something of a saint-like aura. For, agreeing with him